

NIO/W

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC 1688-83
8 March 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Constantine C. Menges
National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT: Latin America - Warning Meeting - February 1983

El Salvador

1. The political infighting in the military has continued to have a deleterious effect on the conduct of the guerrilla war, but the bottom line judgment remains that the Salvadoran military will be able to maintain the stalemate. Most analysts expect that General Garcia will resign and doubt that current pressures from conservative politicians and military officers will lead to a coup attempt. If Garcia refuses to step down, this would sharpen conflicts within the military and lower its combat effectiveness.

2. The momentum could swing dramatically to the guerrilla side, however, if US military aid to El Salvador is cut off or the US is perceived as supporting guerrilla power-sharing. Most analysts assume that the military is hoarding ammunition in expectation of such a cutoff, and it would be able to maintain current levels of activity for only a few months if not resupplied.

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Suriname

3. Bouterse remains in control with a small coterie of loyalists on whom he can rely. A new revolutionary government has been announced, drawing most of its support and members from the radical PALU and the pro-Cuban RVP. Analysts expect a slow "accretion" in the Cuban presence as small numbers of security, financial, and agricultural advisers move into the country. Bouterse apparently feels sufficiently confident in his position to travel to New Delhi for the NAM with a possible side trip to the USSR.

4. One analyst noted that "everyone is afraid to talk to Americans" because of the repression by the "people's militia." Concerning the democratic opposition, there is virtually no information about its activities in Suriname and internationally, the analysts expect mainly political gestures. France is perceived as anxious to assure that no exile paramilitary force crosses into Suriname from French Guiana.

5. Concerning future relations with Cuba, the State Department/INR country analyst said, "If he (Bouterse) perceives himself internationally isolated, then he will move more toward Cuba." CIA and DoD analysts agreed with that. The NIO/LA views this as an inaccurate formulation of the situation and instead would note that once Bouterse made the decision to crush the democratic opposition groups in December 1982 in order to retain power, he saw the Cuban link as the best way to assure this. While Bouterse would also like to have western economic aid, even if it were provided, he would use it while retaining and increasing his Cuban/Soviet bloc political/security relationships in order to keep power (following the successful example of the Sandinista Directorate in Nicaragua).

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Bolivia

6. Analysts indicated that the level of coup plotting is relatively low by Bolivian standards, although one analyst noted little usually is known about most successful coups before they are launched. The general assumption is that the military is not pleased with President Siles, but is prepared to wait until he has sufficiently discredited himself and his regime before moving against him. And so far Siles has had difficulty managing Bolivia's serious financial problems and controlling disparate elements within the government coalition. On balance, analysts are more positive than last month and expect that Siles has a good chance of remaining on top.

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7. Analysts have yet to see any large increase in the number of Soviets, Cubans, Nicaraguans, or any radical Arab presence in the country and do not believe they pose a serious, subversive threat to the government. DoD/ISA noted that the military has the capability to pull off a coup, but now lacks the will and the unity to do so. If and when the military moves against Siles, however, Siles' non-aligned impulses and especially the decision to reestablish relations with Cuba will be the major issue. 25X1

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Pope's Visit

10. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He believes the visit will focus attention and some opprobrium on the "popular Church," but doubts that much will be changed in the long run. Several threats have been made against the Pope (Haiti and Guatemala), but apparently nothing credible yet.

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Haiti

11. The views of most analysts can be summarized as follows: They see no reason for increased concern re Duvalier's position and the stability of the regime in general. The Hector Riobe Brigade warrants closer attention in that it has pulled off some operations within the country (bombings) which is much more than any other exile group has managed to date. The Brigade, however, is small (perhaps less than a score), Miami-based, and with no known ties to the Cubans. There have been no signs of increased Cuban support for anti-regime activists, increased rhetoric, or any infiltration attempts.

12. However, the NIO/LA is concerned that there is some real potential for Cuban-supported destabilization in the next 12-18 months which warrants more attention. Drawing on the information presented in two DDI papers on Haiti (31 January 1983 and 3 February 1983), the following items summarize reasons for concern:

- Among 19 organized anti-Duvalier groups listed by the CIA, 8 are Marxist-Leninist, 1 is Maoist, 3 others are also supportive of violent action and only 2 are connected to genuinely democratic political parties abroad (Social Democrats).
- The communist party of Haiti is funded by the Soviet Union, closely linked to the Dominican communist party; it has leaders in France, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic along with four identified front and auxiliary organizations.

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--The total estimated membership of three Marxist-Leninist paramilitary groups is 550 to which could be added as a destabilizing factor the estimated 250 members of the Maoist group and unknown numbers of the five communist party organizations and three other violent anti-Duvalier groups.

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--The estimated 40,000 Haitians living in Cuba (some of whom have served in the Cuban armed forces) and the estimated 35,000 to 300,000 Haitians living in the Dominican Republic offer the far left accessible persons for recruitment.

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Warning Briefs (NIO/LA items -- not discussed at the meeting)

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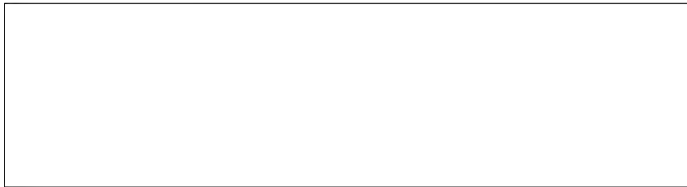
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DATE: 4 March 1983

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